

March 2016

1. Government- Child abuse whistleblowing

The Minister for Preventing Abuse, Exploitation and Crime has launched a new whistleblowing helpline for employees to speak out about child protection failures.

The NSPCC will deliver this service, which includes a helpline and email support, on behalf of the HO. The Government has provided £500,000 to set up the helpline.

The helpline will be open Monday to Friday. It will handle calls from employees from any sector, who are afraid to raise concerns about the way their organisation is dealing with cases of child abuse, or who feel they have exhausted all avenues with their employer.

Employees will be offered advice about the whistleblowing process and will be legally protected from any future workplace discrimination arising as a result of their concerns. Any concerns raised will be passed on to relevant investigatory bodies to pursue

Link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-office-launches-child-abuse-whistleblowing-helpline>

2. Government - Consultation on a new CSE definition

A consultation seeking views on a new definition of CSE was launched on Friday.

There are a number of definitions currently in use by voluntary organisations and agencies. This has led to confusion and additional challenges for practitioners working with children and families, creating inconsistencies in risk assessment and data collection. The government aims to provide clarity so all professionals are using the same definition of CSE in their work to prevent abuse and investigate offending.

The proposed definition is:

‘Child sexual exploitation is a form of child abuse. It occurs where anyone under the age of 18 is persuaded, coerced or forced into sexual activity in exchange for, amongst other things, money, drugs/alcohol, gifts, affection or status. Consent is irrelevant, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact and may occur online.’

Link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/consultation-on-a-new-child-sexual-exploitation->

3. Anti-Bullying Alliance - Disabled young people that identify as LGBT+ bullied and silenced in our schools

The Anti-Bullying Alliance, hosted by the National Children’s Bureau, is publishing new resources for school staff to help tackle the homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying of disabled young people and those with special educational needs.

Link: <http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/latest-news/disabled-lgbtplus-young-people-bullied-in-school/>

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4. Government - Counselling in schools

Departmental advice for schools about setting up and improving counselling services for pupils. It relates to all primary and secondary schools in England.

Link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counselling-in-schools>

5. Young Carers- The lives of young carers in England

Research on young carers and the effect caring has on their lives.

The report summarises research into young carers and their families in England e.g.

- access to support and services
- nature of care young carers provide
- effect of caring responsibilities on young carers' health, school life and social life

Link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-lives-of-young-carers-in-england>

6. Youth Select Committee report on Young People's Mental Health receives Government response

The Government has released its response to the Youth Select Committee's report into Young People's Mental Health. The joint response comes from the DfE and the DH.

Alistair Burt MP, Minister for Community and Social Care, and Sam Gyimah MP, Minister for Childcare and Education, praised the Committee for a "well-informed and thoughtful report", highlighting the Youth Select Committee's "professionalism, passion and ability to ask the right questions".

The response follows the Youth Select Committee's 2015 inquiry into Young People's Mental Health, which concluded that mental health services for young people are critically underfunded.

The report offered recommendations across three key areas:

- funding and the state of services
- a role for education and awareness
- stigma and digital culture

Link: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/news/2016/february/youth-select-committee-report-on-young-peoples-mental-health-receives-government-response/>

7. Children's mental health: new online resources for adults

Alistair Burt outlines why adults should talk to children and young people about mental health and introduces new online resources

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/childrens-mental-health-new-online-resources-for-adults>